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FOREWORD

This edition of THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA, the 65th in print, provides comprehensive coverage of political and economic life at the regional, sub-regional and national levels. The volume is divided into three separate, though complementary, sections. In Part One a collection of introductory essays discusses the most pertinent issues affecting the region. Topics covered include the challenges arising from the Syrian refugee crisis, the growth of political Islam and the intellectual origins of the movement, and the issue of Kurdish political autonomy and identity. This section also includes an essay analysing US policy in the region from the early 20th century until the present day. In Part Two specialist authors, researchers and commentators examine in detail the main political and economic events in each of the countries and territories in the region. In addition, all statistical and directory material has been thoroughly updated. Extensive coverage of international organizations and research bodies active in the Middle East and North Africa is included in a section of Regional Information, together with a comprehensive archive of documents related to the history of Israel and the Palestinian Territories, and bibliographies of essential publications for further study. A calendar of the key political events of 2017–18 enables rapid reference to the year's main developments.

During the year under review, Iran dominated the region's affairs. In May 2018 President Donald Trump withdrew the USA from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on the development of nuclear weapons by Iran, citing his dissatisfaction with the terms of the agreement. The JCPOA had been approved by Trump's immediate predecessor as President, Barack Obama, in 2015, amid an attempt by the Obama Administration, the European Union, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China to thwart Iranian ambitions towards a nuclear arsenal and to reintegrate that country into the global economy. Domestically, the Government of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani came under pressure over the country's economic performance, with large-scale protests erupting in its major cities in December 2017 and the Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance being impeached by parliament in August 2018. However, elsewhere in the region, Iranian influence continued to grow. In the Syrian Arab Republic, Iranian and Russian military support enabled the Government of President Bashar al-Assad to reassert control over the majority of the territory previously held by opposition groups since the onset of the civil war in 2011. In Lebanon, the Iranian-supported Shi'a militia group Hezbollah and its allies gained a significant number of seats in legislative elections in May 2018. Meanwhile, in Iraq, Iranian-backed 'Popular Mobilization Units' (PMUs) assisted the national armed forces in regaining territory in the north of the country from the *jihadist* organization Islamic State and from the autonomous Kurdish Regional Government. Moreover, at legislative elections held just days after the USA's abrogation of the JCPOA in May 2018, the pro-Iranian al-Fatah alliance that had emerged from the PMUs secured 47 seats in the Iraqi parliament,surpassing the party of incumbent Prime Minister Haidar al-Abadi.

Other events covered in this edition include the transition to a presidential system of government following presidential and legislative elections in Turkey, presidential elections in Cyprus and Egypt, and government reorganizations in Algeria, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates.

The entire content of the print edition of THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA is available online at www.europaworld.com. This prestigious resource incorporates sophisticated search and browse functions as well as specially commissioned visual and statistical content. An ongoing programme of updates of key areas of information ensures currency of content, and enhances the richness of the coverage.

The Editors would like to express their thanks to all the contributors for their articles and advice, as well as to the numerous governments and organizations that provided statistical and other information.

October 2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Editors gratefully acknowledge the interest and co-operation of numerous national statistical and information offices, and government departments, as well as embassies in London and throughout the region, whose kind assistance in updating the material contained in THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA is greatly appreciated.

We acknowledge particular indebtedness for permission to reproduce material from the following publications: the United Nations' statistical databases and *Demographic Yearbook, Statistical Yearbook and Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's Institute for Statistics database; the *Human Development Report* of the United Nations Development Programme; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' statistical database; the statistical databases of the World Health Organization; the statistical databases of the UNCTAD/WTO International Trade Centre; the International Labour Office's statistical database; the World Bank's statistical databases, especially the World Development Indicators database, and the *World Development Report*; the International Monetary Fund's statistical database, *International Financial Statistics* and *Government Finance Statistics Yearbook*; the World Tourism Organization's *Tourism Highlights 2017* and *Yearbook of Tourism Statistics, 2017 edition*, UNWTO, Madrid (copyright 92844/54/17; the US Geological Survey; the International Telecommunication Union; the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia's *National Accounts Studies of the ESCWA Region*; Lloyd's List; and *The Military Balance 2018*, a publication of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Arundel House, 6 Temple Pl., London, WC2R 2PG, UK. We are also grateful to the Israeli embassy, London, for the use of two maps illustrating the disengagement agreements between Israel and Egypt, and Israel and Syria (both 1974).

The following publications have been of special value in providing regular coverage of the affairs of the Middle East and North Africa region: *Maghreb Confidential* and *Middle East Economic Digest*.

HEALTH AND WELFARE STATISTICS: SOURCES AND DEFINITIONS

Total fertility rate Source: WHO Global Health Observatory. The number of children that would be born per woman, assuming no female mortality at child-bearing ages and the age-specific fertility rates of a specified country and reference period.

Under-5 mortality rate Source: WHO Global Health Observatory. Defined by WHO as the probability of a child born in a specific year or period dying before reaching the age of five, if subject to the age-specific mortality rates of the year or period.

HIV/AIDS Source: UNAIDS. Estimated percentage of adults aged 15 to 49 years living with HIV/AIDS. < indicates 'fewer than'.

Health expenditure Source: Global Health Expenditure database. Covering the provision of health services (preventive and curative), family planning activities, and nutrition activities. Public sources include domestic revenue as internal transfers and grants, transfers, subsidies to voluntary health insurance beneficiaries, non-profit institutions serving households (NPISH) or enterprise financing schemes as well as compulsory prepayment and social health insurance contributions. External grants or loans for healthcare provided by international agencies and other national authorities are not included.

US $ per head (PPP)

International dollar estimates. Current domestic general government expenditures as a ratio of total population.

% of GDP

The share of domestic general government resources used to funs health expenditures, given as a percentage of the economy as measured by gross domestic product (GDP).

Public expenditure % of total expenditure

Share of current health expenditures funded from general government sources, social health insurance and compulsory prepayment.

Access to water and sanitation Source: WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme on Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP) (*Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water, 2017 Update and MDG Assessment*). Defined in terms of the percentage of the population using improved facilities in terms of the type of technology and levels of service afforded. For water, this includes house connections, public standpipes, boreholes with handpumps, protected dug wells, protected spring and rainwater collection; allowance is also made for other locally defined technologies. Sanitation is defined to include connection to a sewer or septic tank system, pour-flush latrine, simple pit or ventilated improved pit latrine, again with allowance for acceptable local technologies. Access to water and sanitation does not imply that the level of service or quality of water is 'adequate' or 'safe'.

Carbon dioxide emissions Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators database, citing the Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center (sponsored by the US Department of Energy). Emissions comprise those resulting from the burning of fossil fuels (including those produced during consumption of solid, liquid and gas fuels and from gas flaring) and from the manufacture of cement.

Human Development Index (HDI) Source: UNDP, *Human Development Report* (2016). A summary of human development measured by three basic dimensions: prospects for a long and healthy life, measured by life expectancy at birth; knowledge, measured by adult literacy rate (two-thirds' weight) and the combined gross enrolment ratio in primary, secondary and tertiary education (one-third weight); and standard of living, measured by GDP per head (PPP US $). The index value obtained lies between zero and one. A value above 0.800 indicates very high human development, between 0.700 and 0.799 high human development, between 0.550 and 0.699 medium human development, and below 0.550 low human development. A centralized data source for all three dimensions was not available for all countries. In some cases other data sources were used to calculate a substitute value; however, this was excluded from the ranking. Other countries, including non-UNDP members, were excluded from the HDI altogether. In total, 188 countries were ranked for 2015.

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